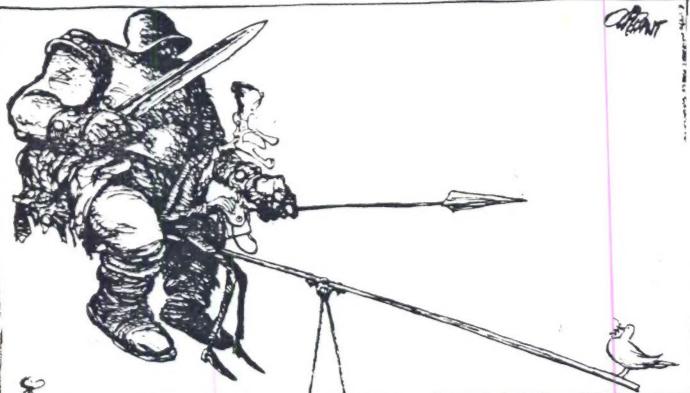


anyone's arm to sign up.

I also keep reading about women and how public opinion will change if females in the services start coming home dead. These women signed up too. No one forced them.



"JUST IGNORE YOUR FATHER TODAY, DEAR—BOB DYLAN TURNED FIFTY!"



SADDAM THE SATANICAL

Recent events in the Middle East have fulfilled many more of Nostradamus' predictions made over 500 years ago:

"The machines of flying fire will come to trouble their leader..."

"Because of the heat from the fires raging upon the sea."

"Fire will fall from the sky onto the Royal Buildings of Iraq."

"The underground fortress of their besieged leaders will be..."

Previously undeciphered anagrams have finally been decoded in this new book—the names "Hussein" "Saddam" "Iraq" appear in 15 different locations with unbelievable implications.

"...gripping, chilling" "...absolutely uncanny" "...frightening"
-Probakah G. Agrawal, Book Reviewer

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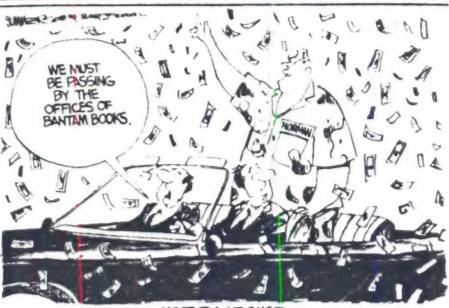
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APA-FILK

MAILING #51



MILITARY ADVANCE



Trustee Chosen For Monarch



"NOW WE CAN FEEL BETTER ABOUT OURSELVES!"

KUWAIT HIGH SCHOOL 1991 YEARBOOK

We had a year it's been for the seniors! First, classes were suspended for the fall and winter. Most of us left for Cairo or Gstaad. Then, liberation! What a hoot! As Prince Tamim "Disco" Al-Amin put it, "Saddam Hussein can eat my shorts!" Even with no classes, five guys got into Princeton and three into UCLA, so the year wasn't a total loss. Also, there was the senior prom... talk about a blast! Thanks to Sheik al-Sabah for letting us use his townhouse in London, and to the whole class for showing so much spirit. Go, Scorpions!

HAMED AL-MESBAH

"Ham" "Pee-Wee" Vice President. Illegal editorial... wenni reforms... boycotted Emir's party working at McDonald's... "sweet spot" on a baseball... ambition: "to move Kuwait into the 15th century"



YOUSSEF AL-MIAZI
"Miz" "The Miz"
Class President. Slept through the invasion... Treasures for neighborhood resistance cell... "Grow up!" Quote: "Down with the den of treason and shame, as mentioned in our previous communiqué."

AHMAD SALMAN
"Sandy" "Tanner"
Class Secretary. P.L.O. donation boxes. Only guy in school who could fix the air conditioning... "Go, Intifada!" Soccer I, II... Uncle Hussein... Missing for two months



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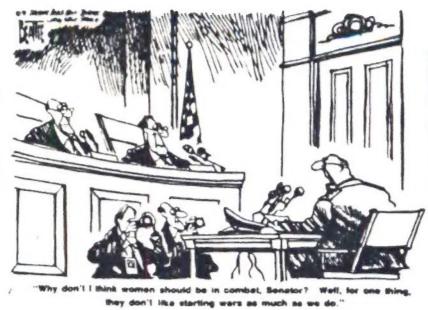
Good Luck from
THE ALLIES
Red Adair Co.
Houston
"Not a Capo in sight!"

Verdict. Post-traumatic
stress syndrome is the de-
fense of a Vietnam vet. (CC)

Compliments of
BECHTEL

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Feeling No Pain

It is worth noting that of the 535 members of Congress, only two have relatives involved in Operation Desert Storm and they both voted against the use of force. It is interesting, too, that I haven't heard of any relatives of the Trumps, Milkens, Boeskys and Keatings in the gulf. Were the affluent and the influential made to share in the sacrifice there would be no war.

*Newsday
27 Jan 1991*

John G. Fuchs
Brooklyn

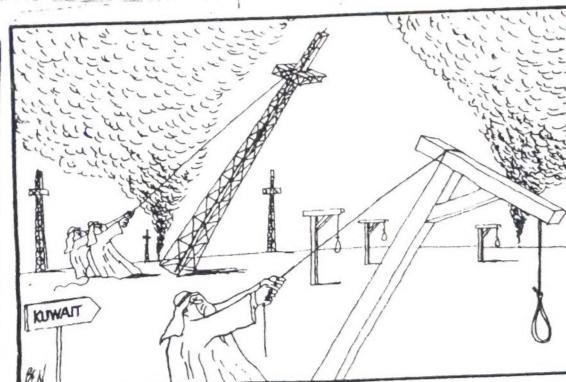
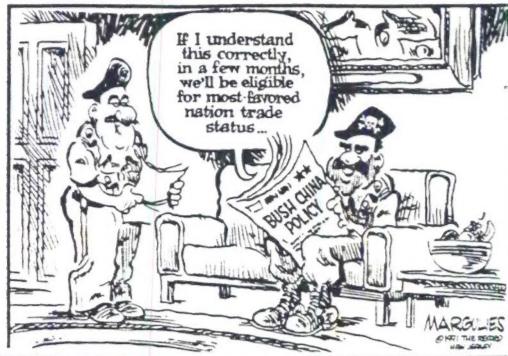
HULK HOGAN

BUBBLE BATH

299



COULD YOU BE MORE PACIFIC?



In the 90's, The 80's Turn to Junk

ANAKREON

#51, APA-FILK MAILING #51

1 August 1991

EARL ROBINSON (1910-1991)

Those who love popular, progressive, and patriotic music mourn the death on 20 July of Earl Robinson, who for over half a century composed songs and cantatas for these causes. Though the word 'patriotism' has been defiled by red-baiting goons and yellow-ribboned nitwits, its true meaning still shines in Robinson's cantata Ballad for Americans, written by him and John Latouche in 1939, and presented by Paul Robeson the following year at, of all places, the Republican National Convention. (The spiritual descendants of Abraham Lincoln must have loved it as much as the spiritual ancestors of George Bush must have hated it!)

Another Robinson cantata, as good as Ballad for Americans but, unfortunately, not as well known, was The Lonesome Train, about the tragic death of Abraham Lincoln and its impact on the country he saved. And he wrote, in 1945, "The House I Live In", which was first recorded in a short film, and then repudiated out of fear of red-baiting, by a Mafia saloon singer whose name I cannot now recall. "The House I Live In" was an appeal for racial and religious harmony, whose spirit we still need badly in this country - and in others, too.

As you might expect, Robinson was blacklisted during the 1950s, in a time when it was believed that a world-wide conspiracy threatened the nation, and that this dire fate could be averted only if people like Earl Robinson could be denied audiences. It was Robinson's fate, in a lifetime which spanned more than a third of the history of the republic, to see both the birth and the death of this delusion, and to survive it with his reputation unimpaired.

Robinson's best-known song, "Joe Hill", was written in 1938, with words by Alfred Hayes, to commemorate the judicial murder in 1915 of the labor organizer Joe Hill. It immediately achieved virtually legendary status, and was as well known among folk music enthusiasts in the 1940s as it was in 1969 after Joan Baez revived it at the Woodstock Festival. It is one of the ironies of history that by 1969 the labor movement, which Joe Hill had died to help build, was bitterly opposed to peace and virtually every other progressive cause, and has by now, as a direct result of this, sunk almost to the obscurity it possessed in Hill's lifetime. But Hill, who belonged to the thoroughly anti-war Industrial Workers of the World, could have told them that.

THE CHECKERBOARD FLAG

(Tune: "The Bonnie Blue Flag")

1944 Yugoslav F.

We are the brave Croatians, all filled with ethnic pride,
 Fighting for our freedom as we did at Hitler's side.
 And when we're full of slivovitz, which happens now and then,
 We raise on high the checkerboard flag that's coming back again!

CHORUS: Hurrah, hurrah, for all our fighting men!
 We raise on high the checkerboard flag that's coming back again!

We were not always Yugoslavs, a thing that you should know.
 We were a sovereign nation just nine hundred years ago.
 We're rolling back the centuries, with bombs and guns and men -
 Hurrah for the checkerboard flag that's coming back again!

CHORUS:

We gave Croatian freedom quite a try in 'Forty-One -
 You should have seen the Serbians and Jews and Gypsies run!
 It lasted just till 'Forty-Five, but now's the season when
 We raise on high the checkerboard flag that's coming back again!

CHORUS:

No longer will the foreign dogs deny us liberty -
 We're fighting for a world in which each nation shall be free,
 But if the Serbs secede from us, we'll blast them with a Sten,
 And raise on high the checkerboard flag that's coming back again!

CHORUS:

The united peoples of Yugoslavia, conquered half a century ago by Nazi Germany, mounted the most effective resistance in occupied Europe, under the leadership of Tito (Josip Broz), who was half Croat and half Slovene. Unfortunately, many Croats sided with a puppet Croat state erected by the Germans, which used a "checkerboard" emblem. (The Germans put on its throne an Italian prince, who very sensibly never set foot in the country.)

It now seems as if Croatia and Slovenia want to do what South Carolina and Georgia once did here, so "The Bonnie Blue Flag", principal slaver anthem after "Dixie", was a natural tune. And, just as the Virginia secessionists refused to let West Virginia secede from them, so Croatia is denying this right to the Serbs of Krajina. Under these circumstances, I am sure that the government of Yugoslavia can find a Sherman to deal with the seceding districts.

The analogy even extends to those solemn newspaper analyses that see the seceding republics as the economic motor of Yugoslavia, without which the nation cannot function in the modern world. The Confederate secessionists of 1861 were convinced that their cotton exports were indispensable to the U. S. position in world commerce, and that the world demand for their cotton would bring them foreign backing.

For anyone who remembers the heroic Yugoslav resistance of World War II, the issue is relatively simple. If Franjo Tudjman, leader of the Croatian secessionists is right, then Tito was wrong.

ONWARD PAGAN SOLDIERS

(Tune: "Onward, Christian Soldiers", by Sir Arthur Sullivan)

Onward, Pagan soldiers, marching off to war,
 With the sword of Ares going on before.

Farewell, field and hearthside; farewell, grove and glen;
 See the God and Goddess lead a million fighting men!

CHORUS: Onward, Pagan soldiers, marching off to war,
 With the sword of Ares going on before.

Here's to human sacrifice, as in days gone by,
 Open chests of victims, hold their hearts on high.
 Form your magic circles, war-paint on your brow.
 Fill your chalice full of blood, for that's the Great Rite now.

CHORUS:

We support our soldiers, men and women too,
 Now the world will see what warrior maids can do.
 Pagan priests and priestesses howl for victory,
 Not a Jew or Christian yells as loud for blood as we.

CHORUS:

Anath shield our airmen, smiting from on high.
 Thor and Indra guard them as they kill and fly.
 Druids bring your magic rites out from under trees.
 Witches gather mushrooms, too, but no such clouds as these.

CHORUS:

When it seemed obvious that President Bush wanted a war to restore his sense of his own masculinity, I was not surprised to hear the usual assortment of brand-name clergymen cast their blessings upon his warriors. Aside from a few pacifistic malcontents like the Quakers, Jains, and Pax Christi, priests of all sects - despite whatever doctrines of peace and reconciliation they preach in other times, join in the cries for blood. If you are curious about how this operates in the United States of America, I refer you to Ray Abrams's Preachers Present Arms (1933) or Donald A. Wells's The War Myth (1967). Abrams reported that in all the United States only seventy clergymen opposed World War I. (This figure is somewhat tainted by the fact that the two principal "peace churches", the Quakers and the Jehovah's Witnesses, do not have formal "ministries".) They included no southerners, no Roman Catholic priests, and only three rabbis. Matters have been little better in subsequent wars.

I confess I was grievously disappointed by the Neo-Pagan response to Bush's war, as I had expected better of them. When I first began encountering Neo-Pagans, over 20 years ago, I was quite favorably impressed by them. I am too much a materialist to join their ranks, but I have had many Neo-Pagan friends, and I looked with sympathy on their efforts to design and practice rites that celebrated the changes of the seasons, and worked for life and growth. I was also attracted to the strongly Feminist content of Neo-Paganism, as opposed to the hierarchical, aggressive, masculine character of name-brand religions. And you will never see a Neo-Pagan standing on a street corner, yelling: "Believe on the Great Mother and Her Consort and thou shalt be saved!"

When verses from "That Real Old-Time Religion" came in from the left coast, I eagerly took it up and started publishing collections of them, beginning in ANAKREON #6 on 1 May 1980. New verses poured in from Neo-Pagans

all over the country, and I added a few myself. Sheets of blank paper were posted at Pan-Pagan festivals, and participants added their improvisations.

Last October, for ANAKREON #49, nearly a hundred verses were sent in by Rik Johnson, an Air Force officer, who gathered them among what seems to be a sizable number of covens in the U. S. armed forces. In correspondence between us anent these verses, Johnson expressed hope that he would get to participate in this Muddle Eastern war.

On 2 February 1991, as the U. S. armed forces were shooting up Iraq, we had a few friends over, and one of them brought as his date a Neo-Pagan priestess named Marian Stensgard. As you might expect under the circumstances, the subject of the Gulf War came up. Stensgard went into sheer raging war frenzy; a Southern Baptist preacher or a Cardinal Archbishop could not have equalled her screams for blood. She invoked the use of nuclear weapons, and bellowed for the extermination of the Iraqi people. Her arm-waving frenzy seemed about to transform her from an advocate of violence into an active practitioner of it, so in order to protect my guests and myself, I had to order her out of the house.

My experiences with Johnson and with Stensgard were something of an eye-opener. I had, obviously without thinking about it, presumed that a religion which stressed life, birth, and growth, engaged in reforestation as a religious duty, celebrated the return of the seasons, the sowing and the harvest, and strove to keep our planet from being polluted, would also necessarily prefer peace to war. Was I ever mistaken!

Johnson has since sent in a second set of verses, and other people may also respond to the invitation I put into ANAKREON #50, asking for verses of "That Real Old-Time Religion" for ANAKREON #52 on 1 November 1991. Any such verses that come in by about the middle of October will be printed, after editing to ensure that none of them duplicate already printed verses. (The index that Mark Blackman put into ANAKREON #50 will make this much easier.)

However, after ANAKREON #52 I will be about as inclined to publish further Neo-Pagan filksongs, as I would be to publish Christian hymns.

GETTING CAUGHT UP

APA-Filk cover #50: So, you got one of my collages on the 50th Mailing, and unless something comes in at the last minute, you'll get one on this 51st Mailing as well. I may not have the facilities do to a collage cover for the 52nd Mailing (1 November 1991), so the front cover of ANAKREON #52 may just also be the front cover of the whole Mailing.

Jersey Flats #24 (Rogow): We are looking forward to Futurespeak, and although your book falls a little outside the purview of APA-Filk, I will review it in an upcoming ANAKREON.

As for cons, SMOF away, Roberta! I can't think of anyone who's deserved the right more than you.

I once saw an episode of La La Law, and wasn't much impressed by it. Night Court is funnier, and probably not much less realistic. As Dave Schwartz, Att'y-at-Law, once told me, "I don't have to watch Night Court. I live it!"

The "massive attack of patriotism" may not be over. A couple of weeks ago, George Bush was said to be looking over a list of air strike targets in Iraq, presumably because they have not yet licked his boots to a sufficiently high gloss.

Singspiel #50 (Blackman): We are going to hear a lot of songs and sentiments like the filk of Dylan which you printed, especially if this war busts open again. As Paul Krasner once said: "People don't sell - they

(continued on p. 6)

THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE

APA-Filk is a quarterly amateur press association by and for filksingers. It is collated and published on the first day of each February, May, August, and November by John Boardman, 234 East 19th Street, Brooklyn, New York 11226-5302. The copy count is 60, and the many readers who have heretofore been passive recipients of APA-Filk Mailings are invited to send in filk songs that they have composed or heard.

ANAKREON is the publisher's own contribution to APA-Filk, and it also goes to everyone who receives his fanzine DAGON.

APA-Filk was founded in 1 February 1979 by Robert Bryan Lipton, who is currently suffering from an attack of writer's block. We all wish his speedy recovery.

If you would like to receive APA-Filk, send in a few dollars for postage and packing, and I'll keep you posted on the state of this account. As of 29 July 1991, the postage balances of the following people stand at the indicated levels:

Steve Brinich	+\$12.45	Cheryl Lloyd	+\$4.27	Beverly Slayton	+\$6.08
Mike Browne	+\$2.00	J. Spencer Love	+\$3.17	Mike Stein	+\$11.30
Harold Groot	+\$5.13	Matthew Marcus	+\$15.24	Peter Thiesen	+\$15.47
Cecilia Hatlestad	+\$9.20	Doreen Miller	+\$1.21	Sol Weber	+\$6.09
Rennie Levine	+\$25.00	Pete Seeger	+\$15.06		

The space to the right gives the balance in your account, including costs of sending out this present 51st Mailing. In addition, Mike Agranoff, Brian Burley, Albert A. Nofi, and Roberta Rogow receive complimentary copies of APA-Filk. The accounts of the following people are combined with their APA-Q accounts and listed in APA-Q: Mark Blackman, Daniel B. Holzman, Robert Bryan Lipton, Lois Mangan, Jeff Poretzky, and Jane T. Sibley. Most of these people will be receiving the 51st Mailing of APA-Filk along with the 333rd Distribution of APA-Q.

APA-Filk accounts which fall into arrears will be suspended; so will accounts of people whose Mailings come back in the mail. Presently suspended accounts are:

Harry Andruschak	-14¢	Mistie Joyce	+\$6.86	Kathy Sands	-12¢
Greg Baker	-91¢	Leslie Lyons	-49¢	Karen Shaub	-73¢
Sally & Barry Childs-Helton	-74¢	Randall McDougall	-65¢	Elliot Shorter	-\$2.00
Sean Cleary	=38¢	Margaret Middleton	-74¢	Nick Simichich	-69¢
Gerald Collins	-10¢	Dena Mussaf	-87¢	Glenn Simser	-54¢
Paul Doerr	-50¢	Deirdre & Jim	-	Dana Snow	-15¢
Bob Fitch	+50¢	Rittenhouse	-15¢	Rick Weiss	-\$1.25
		Michael Rubin	-82¢	Paul Willett	-\$1.23

Several back issues of APA-Filk are available, for the cost of postage and packing, which can come from your existing account. These back issues, and the numbers of them, are:

16 = 3	30 - 4	36 - 10	41 - 9	46 = 24
17 - 1	31 = 8	37 - 16	42 - 8	47 - 17
18 - 6	32 = 14	38 - 18	43 - 16	48 - 22
19 - 1	33 = 13	39 - 16	44 - 15	49 - 23
20 = 4	34 - 15	40 - 9	45 - 18	50 - 23
28 - 1	35-- 14			

O	At
P	Great
E	Intervals
R	This
A	Appears
T	To
I	Inflame
O	Optic
N	Nerves

GETTING CAUGHT UP (continued from p. 4)

buy in." I suppose we can expect to see a number of ex-hippies, in state-of-the-nineties fashions, carefully explain why opposition to the war with Vietnam, and support of the war with Iraq, both follow from the same principles that they have followed without deviation for a quarter century. Or, if this is unconvincing, there will be confessions of how weak and inexperienced and unmannerly I was, back in the days when (Foolish me!) I thought that peace was preferable to war. People who wear cashmere jackets shouldn't beat breasts.

D. C. al Fine #11 (Stein): Don't knock the Pentagon's security, or lack of it. It may be the only way left to make effective anti-war statements.

Sellers are "paying points" now? I realize that it was a part of the settled course of nature, that the real estate "boom" would collapse, but I hadn't realized it had collapsed that far. I'm sorry to hear, on the last several issues of D. C. al Fine, that you have been having so many difficulties with your new place.

Since you wrote about the effectiveness of U. S. weapons systems, some Israeli officials have said that their country would have taken less damage if the Iraqi Scuds had been unopposed, than what happened when U. S. Patriots were shot up at them. Even an anti-missile missile has to come down somewhere. Well, Israel is a big boy now, and can take care of himself!

D. C. al Fine #12 (Stein): When all is said and done, you supported the Gulf War and I opposed it. Work your way out of that!

"Real Soon Now" is very good, and tells a story that is, alas, all too common.

GRACELESS NOTES

The things I had been unable to comment upon in #50 will also go uncommented upon in #51. Partly this is because I have another big press run coming up this weekend, and am also busy preparing to fly out to California next week for a family reunion. (It's my parents' Diamond Anniversary.) But this is also due to a situation probably as old as the cave folk - a wife who rearranges her husband's den, so that now nothing can be found without a massive search. ("Dear, where's my best club? It used to be under this heap of *sivatherium* hides, but you've cut them up for polishing mastodon tusks!")

ANAKREON #51

John Boardman
234 East 19th Street
Brooklyn, New York
11226-5302

FIRST CLASS MAIL

JERSEY FLATS #25August 1991
Roberta Rogow, Other Worlds Books, PO Box 1124, Fair Lawn, NJ 07410

It's hot as blazes...my apartment has no air conditioning...I am barely able to crawl over to the IBM and type out my APA...

THE CRUISE

The Big News for me was Sea Trek '91...a little jaunt that combined a luxury cruise, a Trekkie Con, and a tour of the Maya ruins of Yucatan. I've visited other parts of Mexico, notably Mexico City, Taxco, Guadalajara and Acapulco, but I always wanted to see those ruins. And when the opportunity was combined with a chance to get Up Close and Personal with the Trek people...I couldn't resist.

The Big Doings started in Miami with a Gala Dinner...which was slightly delayed when the plane from Los Angeles got side-tracked at the last minute. Kevin forbid that the STARS should sit with the rest of the peasants...they had to wait until a plane with First Class accomodations could be found for them.

Eventually, they all got there: Gene Roddenberry and Majel Barrett, Robert Justman (the original producer of Star Trek); George Takei, Jimmy Doohan, Nichelle Nichols, Walter Koenig, and various others too numerous to mention. Alas, Mark Leonard and Michael Dorn were NOT on the cruise...they were shooting Klingons and Vulcans on "Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country". And all I found out about it from George was that he gets to command his own ship, and he was the only one who didn't appear in the raw-squid-eating scene.

The Gala was a lovely tribute to the durability of Star Trek and Gene Roddenberry, who was in a wheelchair for most of the trip...he's had several strokes, and Majel Barrett, like every good wife, was worried for him...but he did seem to be having a grand old time.

Everyone got onto the ship...the SS Britannia...and then the hassles began. The cruise staff had never had a situation where EVERYONE wanted to go on shore tours, and NO ONE wanted to be left out...usually the old crocks who can afford the tours don't want to go, and the honeymooners have other things to do (snicker, chortle). And no one told us that we'd need bar privilege cards to get soft drinks...and that they either had to be backed with a credit card or with a deposit of \$150 cash! That nearly blew it for some of the people on board!

Once everyone got through the tour-booking hassles, and found their rooms, there was the Great Room Key mix-up...the cruise staff was baffled at the need for extra cabin keys. That was when they found out that some of the people had never even MET the ones they were sharing a cabin with!

Eventually all got worked out...I found I was eating at George Takei's table, thanks to my rooming with Page Lewis, who's the head of his Fan Club. George had his Mama with him, a sweet little Japanese lady, who knows a lot more English than she lets on. The others at our table were a married couple, and a pair of male buddies who were supposed to have brought their wives, but the wives had to work that week!

Day One(Monday) got us to Key West in the morning .. a lovely spot, in the middle of nowhere. Just the place for people like Tennessee Williams and Ernest Hemingway to go if they wanted privacy...they got it! I saw their houses, also the southernmost point of the continental US....In the afternoon, at sea, the Dealers' Room From Hell opened. Four dealers, two rooms, NO AIR! (It got better later).

In the evening, the "Classic Trek" panel...EVERYONE jammed into the Ballroom for Q-and-A time. (Except for the people who kept trying to beat the one-armed bandits) And there was "entertainment" provided by the regular cruise staff, who were baffled by 800 people who seemed to be making their own entertainment!

Day two(Tuesday)...FINALLY! We got to Playa Del Carmen, and the Ruins of Tulum...as vast as two football fields, and twice as fascinating....This was one of the sites built as a coastal observatory. Some of the buildings had slits so that certain stars could be viewed at particular times of the year. There were beacons on the cliffs that guided ships into the harbor and away from the rocks... And the Trek Classic people had to go home to California to finish their movie, leaving the field to the Movie and Next Gen Trek people (Robin Curtis, John DeLancie, Erik Menyuk, Karel Stryker, Marina Sirtis, Wil Wheaton, and the writers).

Tuesday night was Talent Night...the Costume Call (I showed "The Art Show" and won nothing but a round of applause) and the Talent Show, where I sang "Banned From Argo" and was NOT roundly booed....believe it or not, most of the people there had never heard it! A few did know it, and joined in on the choruses....and later wanted to know where they could find the words!

Day three(Wednesday)...Cozumel, and more ruins. The guide at Tulum was very serious. The guide at Cozumel was a real card (or he thought he was!) Sample joke: After passing the beach, guide holds up large leaf. "Someone lost a bathing suit. Can't be mine.. too small!" The ruins at Cozumel were much smaller than Tulum...more intimate, which made them all the sadder. Cozumel seems to have been a sort of college for healers, rather than an astronomical observatory...

Cozumel was also the main shopping center...get those souvenirs now, folks! I have a basic plan for buying stuff in tourist centers. If I can't wear it, eat it, read it or listen to it, I don't need it, and I don't buy it. I did replenish my earring supply with local craftwork; I picked up some tapes of Mexican music, and a lot of books on Mayan art and architecture so that I could remember what I'd seen. One was obviously translated by someone who learned their English the way I learned my Spanish!

Back on board...I had a really great view of one of the astronomical marvels of the year...Jupiter, Mars and Venus approaching conjunction...all lined up, and closing in. The sky was so clear over the Gulf of Mexico, it was a dazzling sight.

I also got a chance to chat with Ann Crispin and her husband...and to exchange words with a few other people. LOTS of Trek fans from all over the country, if not the World!

Day four (Thursday)..at sea, heading home (if Miami qualifies as home)...This was the one day the Dealers Room was open...and I managed to sell 20 tapes through one of the dealers. I also sat in on one of the "How to Write a Trek Novel" panels, and took my guitar out on deck for some filking...I found a nice shady spot, and went through various elements of my repertoire...People stopped to listen...but there were other things going on, too. Most of the people were out on the back deck, soaking up sunburns, and that's where the action was. I listened to the "Movie Trek" people for a while, but it got VERY hot...and then Marina Sirtis stood up (from the audience) in her teeny bikini...All of a sudden, those people who were filming Majel Barrett swiveled their minicams in the opposite direction!

Marina (imitating Trekkies): "Oh, Miss Barrett, What was it like working with Marina Siritis?"

Majel: "Oh, she's an animal! When we did that nude scene with the Ferengyi!"

Loud Whoops from Marina!

Day Five(Friday) Time to go home...except that I had a 7 PM plane, and I got off the boat and onto the bus around noon. I was at the airport by 12:30...and no way to get anywhere else. ~~It was HOT!~~ So I did the sensible thing...I joined the rest of the cruise people kicking my heels at the airport! We had a Dead Dog party right at the Miami airport...that dwindled away until I got on my plane and met Murray back in New Jersey....

Yes, it was expensive, and I shouldn't have left Union Library at the height of the Story Hour and Class Visit season...but I would have kicked myself from here to Cozumel if I hadn't gone.

OTHER CONS

The Creation Con in New York in June was...so-so. No Big Name Stars...some rumors of what is or is not going on with "Star Trek VI"...and hints of the Fifth Season of ST:NG. The one with Leonard Nimoy in August should be better.

There's a nasty movement going down with Creation Cons...some people are trying a boycott. That makes no sense at all, because the ones who go to Creation Cons usually go because they're the only game in town. Closing down Creations would mean NO Cons at all...smaller organizations simply can't afford major downtown rates in places like New York, Philadelphia, Chicago and Los Angeles. As for getting the Big Name Stars...S_f Cons have gotten by for years without them...but SF cons don't have the same financial draw (or the cash outlay!) that Creation Cons have. It's getting to be a no-win situation for Fans.

Shore Leave...that was a fun one. I got to filk on Friday night,...but between the pressures of the Dealers' Room, and the fact that one of the roommates snored all night I was so bushed on Saturday that I just collapsed after the Costume Call...where I was one of four "Sam Beckett" clones, who then "presented" Al ...we won 2nd place in the Fantasy Category. I think Al should have won the "Harvey Award" for "Best Invisible Contestant".

Except for the Creation Con in August...that's it until WorldCon in Chicago. After WorldCon, I'm going to be busy plogging FutureSpeak, which is supposed to be in the bookstores by September....I'll have copies at WorldCon. And you can see me at Klin-Con in Albany, Dreamwerkes in WilMes-Barrie, OktoberTrek in Baltimore, and Creation Con for Thanksgiving.

NEW PROJECTS

I'm working on Den of Thieves between heat waves...I'm down to the last five chapters. The first 80 pages are at the agent's, and she's already pitched the book to Pocket Books. Wish me luck!

I've also got a comic book script going, collaborating with Rachel Kadushin, who has contacts in the field, and knows what she's doing, which is more than I do when it comes to comics!

And FutureSpeak is supposed to be in print this Fall! Agony is watching the review magazines (Booklist, Library Journal) waiting for the reviews. Agony is getting word from Andy Porter that "there are mistakes in this book" and correcting them on the presses. Agony is wondering if there is something ELSE that you missed out of sheer ignorace...

All this has left me little or no time to write filk. I'm too busy writing other things...

HOWEVER...I'm listening to Country Music again, and it's a very fertile field for filk. Try and catch Garth Brooks' song "The Thunder Rolls"...the first time I heard it, it blew my mind. (The video is melodramatic, and the top stations won't play it, but the song is great!)

I'll be in Chicago...and probably PhilCon...

See ya there....

Roberta Rogow

I rode down to **Disclave** with filkers Mordecai Housman (racing Shabbat) & Mike Browne, and with Peter, Paul & Mary as background music all the way. (It was Dylan's 50th birthday.) Filksinging space was pitifully inadequate - one evening the Green Room (a boardroom), the next an overcrowded & un-air-conditioned hotel room. It moved, but people neglected to put up signs saying to where. Disclave was also the première of a song called "Abby's Got New Genitalia".

I went to a fannish sheva b'ruchot (literally "7 blessings"), a post-wedding dinner/religious service, for ex-APA-Filk'er Harold Feld at Jeff Poretsky's. It occurred to me later to refer to a groom as the "fool to breed the bride".

& ----- THE MELODY LINGERS : Comments on APA-Filk #50 ----- &

COVER Collage/Boardman: I liked the Simpsons-Abbey Road travesty.

ANAKREON/John Boardman: Re "Eating Camel Turds", as the fannish expression says, "If you don't like crottled greeps, why did you order them?" # Re "Shed the blood of Zion for the Emir of Kuwait", true, Jewish soldiers were asked to die for the 2 regimes which have most bankrolled the PLO. And it's equally ironic how our (much-publicized) women soldiers were risking all for people who regard their sisters as little more than chattel. # I'm unfamiliar with "It Never Rains in Southern California". // "REAL Old-Time Religion" Index> People have been talking about doing one, but not doing one, so I finally did, timing it for #50. # "=" means verses are identical or nearly so. And some have been done to death - & beyond. // "Yellow Ribbon"> Thanks for the background. # The usual explanation for the custom of June weddings is that Juno was goddess of marriage. # Whence "Gold Star Mothers". # Korean War vets are now moaning about being "the forgotten vets" & demanding parades & monuments. Your gag about a Grenada War Memorial may not be one for long. # The Tony Orlando song about a prisoner coming home was linked to the Americans imprisoned in the Teheran Embassy. # Mark Russell noted that this is the only war where the parades lasted longer than the war. Months after, the ribbons are still up. Btw, some US soldiers have adopted as a pet name "Desert Stormtroopers" (apparently ignorant not only of its associations with Hitler's Brown Shirts, but also with the bad guys in STAR WARS). # Instead that may have been NYC's largest parade ever. # Maybe the squirrels stole the yellow ribbons because the war was nuts. // ct Cover 49> Um, Freedonia won that war. // ct me> Does the SCA know about ergot? # Goobers = peanuts.

JERSEY FLATS/Roberta Rogow: I have the impression Futurespeak favors filk & media fan terms over mainstream & SMOFish. // Shatner is Canadian. // I daresay your father was paid more as a fake juror than I was as a real one. # At least ST:TNG didn't kill Muldaur in the transporter. // Did you see the "Trek con" episode of She-Wolf of London? ("I fought the network to keep Mr. Snark's nose.") // I'm glad Saddam was slapped down (one Scud hit minutes from my sister-in-law's parent's house, where she & my brother got married), but don't see it was the US's job. Also, he didn't toss missiles at Israel till after the US bombed Iraq. The war was about oil, not Israel (Saddam's motives as well as Bush's).

DC AL FINE #11/Mike Stein: Hope you enjoyed the big brass band; it's partly why HS's can't afford bands. // OVFF> The emphasis on performance encourages aggressiveness perhaps more than talent; filk fandom is discovering the ego problems that have always plagued mainstream sf fandom. // Good luck with the house. // Saddam would have had fewer PR problems had he called his hostages "Peace Shields" or a "Strategic Defense Initiative". 88.5 Ktons of bombs were dropped on Iraq. // ct me> I knew you'd do a filk about your lost luggage. // ct Boardman> A mon avis, tu as raison. // The Moor, ha ha; Othello is this year's Shakespeare in the Park production. /& #12: Jesse Helms? There goes the neighborhood. // And Morocco is considered a "moderate" Arab state. No such animal. // ct me> I was going to ask which Constitution you read, US or CSA, but then noted they're not so different - both explicitly state what States cannot do (Art. I & IV in both; so much for "states' rights", the alleged motive for secession), and neither mention any right of secession, though the CSA Constitution (Art. IV) several times discusses "negro slavery" uneuphemistically. // ct Boardman> Some good points. /// Good seeing you at Disclave. All for now. I'll be at Chicon.

jb

One Hand Clapping #1



PERPETRATED BY RENNIE LEVINE, 2250 E.4TH STREET, BROOKLYN, NY 11223

Hello, APA-Filkers. My name is Rennie (pronounced wren-knee), and I would very much like to be a contributer to APA-Filk. I am a lifelong resident of N.Y.C. -- formerly of Rockaway Park, Queens, and currently of Gravesend, Brooklyn -- and I work for the New York City Criminal Court System (both the system and the defendants are usually criminal). I have been writing parodies and reading SF since grade-school, but I've only recently begun combining the two.

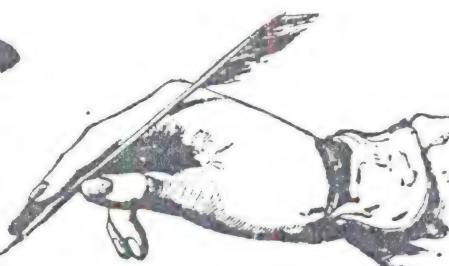
About seventeen years ago (ouch!) I attended a Creation Convention, which turned me completely off to conventions for what I thought would be a lifetime. One of my court co-workers, Sue Knapp, who is a fan, tried to interest me in attending Cons, but I adamantly refused -- after all, I am a grown-up. In December 1989, Sue read a collection of parodies I circulated around work entitled "Kings Kriminal Kourt Karols" (content obvious from title and month of circulation), and she then tried to interest me in something called "filking". This failed, too, until June 1990, when she succeeded in dragging me, almost literally kicking and screaming, to Cherry Hill, N.J. -- CONCERTO. She must have had some sort of pod in the trunk of her car, for I have not been the same person since. My guitar, which had been gathering dust in the back of my closet for about fifteen years, has been getting a lot of exercise lately, and my fingertips once again are callused.

I find myself writing about things I have absolutely no experience with, just because other people write about them. I wrote a Tully song without ever having tasted the stuff (that condition has since been rectified, thank you Mike Browne), and a cannibalism song without ever ... (no, thank you, anybody!!). No comment regarding the other subjects I attempted. (Now that I think about it, few people have personally experienced the subjects that are written about in filk songs, or any SF, or most fiction of any kind. OK, Rennie. Write on!)

The following are representative samples of my filk songs. I would appreciate any comments, pro or con, regarding same.

A bientôt,

Rennie



P O N D E R - O S E - A

(To the tune of the theme song from the T.V. show "Bonanza")

Words perpetrated by Rennie Levine

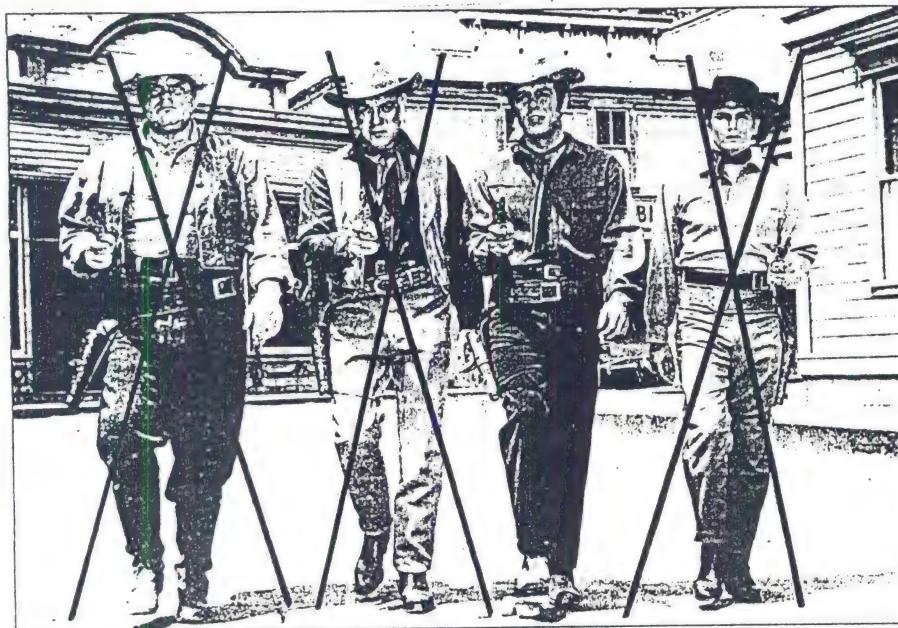
Copyright 1991 by Rennie Levine

Little Joe got pancreatic cancer --
Now the entire family's dead,
Except for the eldest son.

Little Joe got pancreatic cancer --
Now all the Cartwrights have bitten the dust,
Except for Trapper John.

Hoss is dead, Pa is dead, Joe just took the dive --

He's headed out on his own Highway to Heaven --
Trapper John is the only one
of the Cartwrights still alive.



MICHAEL LANDON
Nee Eugene Orowitz
1936 - 1991

T A N S T A A F L

(To the tune of "Univeral Soldier" by Buffy St. Marie)

Words by Rennie Levine

3

(For the record: This is neither a patriotic nor an anti-war song -- it is merely an anti-hypocrisy song.)

He joined the reserves, saying, "What the hell --
We're never gonna have another war."

He saw the military as a civil service job,
And he's had a rude awakening for sure.

He got his education at the government's expense --
It seemed the patriotic thing to do.

All went according to plan, until his Uncle Sam
Gave him the finger, saying, "I want you!"

They called him on the telephone and told him, "This is it,
You're gonna be a part of Desert Shield,
So tie up your loose ends, say goodbye, and pack your kit,
And join the weekend soldiers in the field."

"I'm a federal employee, not a soldier," he replied,
"I never thought I'd have to go to war!
Nobody ever told me I might really have to fight --
This isn't what I joined the army for!"

"I joined up for the benefits, I joined up for the perks,
I joined up for the extra pay.
I didn't join for Exxon, the Kuwaitis, or George Bush,
And certainly not for the U.S.A.!"

He's a hypocrite reservist, a reluctant volunteer,
A small percentage of our fighting force.

He's in Middle Eastern Hell, and he's learned his lesson well:
The military's just for fighting wars.

(Again, for the record: Feel free to substitute "she" and "her".)

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SECOND GLASS OF TULLY

(To the tune of "Second Cup Of Coffee" by Gordon Lightfoot)

Words by Rennie Levine

He's on his second glass of Tully, and he's nursing it with care --
He's hoping that somebody else has brought some more to share;
But if he don't stop his trembling hand from reaching for the Dew,
There won't be enough to last us 'til this filking night is through.

He's on his second glass of Tully -- admire his restraint!
He thought by now there'd be another bottle, but there ain't;
And if he don't stop his trembling hand from reaching for the Dew,
There won't be enough to last us 'til this filking night is through.

BREAK: Sitting around, on chairs and on the ground,
And every hour more come through the door.
B.Y.O.B., and the liquor's flowing free,
But he's the only one with Tullamore.

He's on his second glass of Tully, and the bottle's getting low.
He's sick of being generous, and he's tired of drinking slow,
But if he don't stop his trembling hand from reaching for the Dew,
There won't be enough to last us 'til this filking night is through.

BREAK: Sprawled all around, camaraderie abounds,
As empties pile up higher on the floor.
B.Y.O.B., and the liquor's flowing free,
But he's the only one with Tullamore.

He's downed his second glass of Tully, and he's ready for some more.
He's reaching for the bottle, but he's too slow on the draw --
He couldn't get his trembling hand to grab the bottle first,
So someone else has drunk the Tullamore that should have quenched
his thirst.

ROBBING THE GRAVEYARD

(To the tune of "Waltzing Matilda)

Words by Rennie Levine

5

Just about midnight, when the fog is getting thick,
Too dark and foggy for others to see,
Meet me at the south gate with a shovel and a pick --
You'll come a-robbing the graveyard with me.

CHORUS: Robbing the graveyard, robbing the graveyard,
You'll come a-robbing the graveyard with me.
(Meet me at the south gate with a shovel and a pick,
You'll come a-robbing the graveyard with me.)

We'll find a fresh grave where the grass has yet to grow --
I am as hungry and hungry can be!
Though I am drooling, dinner's still six feet below --
You'll come a-robbing the graveyard with me.

You take the pickaxe, I will shovel out the muck.
Working together is faster, you see,
And I just can't wait 'til I get a marrow bone to suck!
You'll come a-robbing the graveyard with me.

We're making progress, though our methods may be crude,
Two feet already, perhaps even three.
Don't dig too far, I'm not in the mood for Chinese food.
You'll come a-robbing the graveyard with me.

Five feet and counting, it's easy when the grave is fresh --
I'm singing, "Nearer My Dinner to Thee"!
Soon we'll be sinking our choppers into rotting flesh.
You'll come a-robbing the graveyard with me.

Pry up the lid and we'll divvy up the body parts --
Plenty for you, and there's plenty for me.
Nothin as tasty as a decomposing heart!
You'll come a-robbing the graveyard with me.

That was delicious, I'm too full to even breathe --
We picked the bones just as clean as can be.
Please pardon me while I pick the maggots from my teeth.
You'll come a-robbing the graveyard with me.

Glanced at the tombstone to read my meal's ingredients:
"Here Lies A Filker", I shouted with glee.
I should have known that I'd chowed down on a filker, since
They are the best decomposers, you see!

FINAL Munching cadavers, munching cadavers,
CHORUS: You'll come a-munching cadavers with me.
Just a pair of ghouls with an appetite for carrion --
You'll come a-robbing the graveyard with me.

CIRCLE JERK

(To the tune of "Circle Game" by Joni Mitchell)

Words by Rennie Levine

6

Once a little boy awoke from dreaming
Feeling that his bed was slightly damp,
And knowing that it hadn't been from peeing
Thought that he could call himself a man.

CHORUS: And the boys camping out by the lake
Realize their counselor is not awake,
So they gather to perform an ancient rite:
And in the dark they form a ring,
Among the trees they lurk,
And go 'round and 'round and 'round in a circle jerk.

Now the boy, no longer prepubescent,
Lives in constant fear of being caught,
So this nearly hairless adolescent
Locks the bathroom for his favorite sport.

Soon the boy has weathered sixteen summers.
He is so frustrated he could shout.
All his Friday nights have been real bummers --
No girl he has dated will put out.

Now he's grown and travels to conventions,
And thinks that he just has to say the word.
But no woman here will spare him her attention --
Seems our lad has grown into a nerd!

FINAL And the boys camping out by the lake

CHORUS: Realize their counselor is not awake,
So they gather to perform an ancient rite:
And in the dark they form a ring,
Among the trees they lurk,
And go 'round and 'round and 'round in a circle jerk.
They go 'round and 'round and 'round,
Back and forth and up and down,
They go 'round and 'round and 'round in a circle jerk.

P A P E R D R E A M S

7

(To the tune of "Paper Wings" by Stephen Savitzky)

Words by Rennie Levine

She sits in her hotel room, humming someone else's song,

Imagining new lyrics where they do not quite belong.

She takes a xerox copy of the lovely tune she'd heard;

The filker lifts her felt-tipped pen and substitutes her words.

Listen to the song she sings

so late into the night;

She changes all the lyrics

and she dreams of copyright.

Copyright, copyright,

Copyright, copyright.

She recalls the many anecdotes she'd heard of Cons gone by:

The filk songs written by the ones whose names will never die,

Enshrined in fannish memory as if engraved in stone.

She dreams that she might write such magic filk songs of her own.

She scribbles through the graveyard shift into the early dawn;

Her cramped and ink-stained fingers stifle back a sleepy yawn.

A thousand crumpled papers lie about her in a heap,

While lyrics whirl around her head and will not let her sleep.

At last the day breaks clear and warm and she is almost done;

She tightens up the scansion, and inserts a final pun.

She stares at it in wonderment, then folds the page in half,

And puts it in an envelope to mail it to herself.

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GOD LIVES IN TERROR

(To the tune of "God Lives On Terra" by Julia Ecklar)

Words by Rennie Levine

I was raised in the Rockaways by a sandy stretch of beach,
With all the bounty of the sea within my fingers' reach.
I dug for clams and blue-clawed crabs all seasons of the year,
And heard God's heartbeat as I held a conch shell to my ear.

The passage of three decades is an eyeflink to the earth
Compared with the millennia it took to give us birth,
But I have been a witness in the span of thirty years
To that which breaks my heart and surely moves my God to tears.

And God lives in terror for the planet that she loves,
In terror of what mankind has proved
That he can be guilty of;
And when I watch the heavens turn to grey from royal blue,
I know God lives in terror of her nightmares coming true.

Where once the beaches teemed with all the creatures of the seas,
The only movement of the sterile sands is from the breeze.
There are no seashells anymore, the beaches are bereft --
The creatures die so far from shore that only shards are left.

Where once I combed for cockleshells and other treasures found,
There's tampon applicators and used condoms all around;
And where I held a sandcrab or a starfish in my hand,
There's tainted hypodermic needles lurking in the sand.

And God lives in terror of what may yet lie in store:
'Cross the planet's breadth to the ocean's depths,
All corrupted to the core.
A mass of devastation from the sea-bed to the sky --
That's why God's leaving Terra, gone to make a brand-new try;
For God so loves Terra, She can't bear to watch her die.

THE SONG SPARROW #1

Mike Browne 8523 Fort Hamilton Pkwy #41 Brooklyn NY 11209
TEL.#: YB1-OKIR (Between the hours of 8am and 6pm. I'm at work from 10pm to 6am. Call between 8am and 4pm when I'm sleeping if you want me to write a nasty filksong about you. My answering machine generally plays Charlie Parker. Be warned.)

Well, here I go again. Having little if any free time to set my monthly zine KNEE HIGH 2 A PSYCHOPATH ready for collation in APA-NYU, I'm now joining another. Hopefully I can meet the quarterly deadline with some degree of regularity.

Unlike APA-NYU, I think I know everybody in APA-FILK from various cons and fannish gatherings, at least according to the last four issues. For those who don't know or recognize me, (or don't want to admit it) a brief history: I was born in NYC and raised in Jamaica, Queens, the fourth child (second son) of Irish immigrants. I have lived in Brooklyn for almost two years now, having moved to be closer to where I was then working--the Command Center of the New York City Transit Authority. Getting rather unceremoniously booted from that location to my former assignment of selling tokens less than four months later gave me the free time to write filksongs. (Every cloud and all that rot...)

My first exposure to fandom was the first Star Trek convention at the old Statler Hilton. My older brother John was a total Trek nut, and he persuaded Dad to buy a pair of three-day tickets to the thing. Dad took him on Friday, and then John took me on Saturday, and then took my younger brother Kevin on Sunday. (In those days--or at least at THAT particular con--you just showed the rather large ticket and they stamped your hand. (At least I think they did; I was really young then. If anybody reading this remembers the exact date of the con, I was born 2/17/66. Please extrapolate and let me know how old I was then.) I remember having a truly fantastic time, as well as a few rude awakenings. I took my turn standing in a mock-up of the transporter room, said "Energize" just like on the show, and then was disappointed when I didn't go anywhere. (The sound effects and lighting were exact recreations of the show, though). I remember a LOOOONNG line of fans waiting for autographs from Grace Lee Whitney. I also remember she didn't look anywhere as slim and pretty as she had in "Charlie X". I watched "The Doomsday Machine" for at least the fifth time, the difference being that I saw it IN COLOR and without commercials. (We still had a black and white set.) I also remember being convinced of the existence of Heaven when I saw the HUGE dealers room. I wandered in a daze for a while before buying a comic book. Looking back on it now, that room still seems to dwarf even the massive ones at I-CON and Worldcon. It was wall to wall Christmas morning to my young eyes.

Strangely enough, I didn't go to another con until I got hooked on Japanamation through STAR BLAZERS in the 7th grade. I then made a habit of going to Creation cons to buy toys and comic books, alone or with Kevin. At one such con in the early 80s, I was accosted by what I later described as "some pushy fat lady" who tried to get me to buy a songbook for two bucks. (Do you want to buy a songbook, little bard?)

Q
I semi-politely declined and went to another table, not realizing I would one day filk with her and even write in the same apa. That was the first, last, and only time I escaped from Roberta Rogow.

In my junior year at Da Bronx School of Science, I joined the Science Fiction Club, which was run by the school librarian. She introduced me and my fellow club members to the concept of the SF convention that lasted a weekend and required staying in a hotel room with several other people without adult supervision. What sounded fairly exciting turned out to be a wild experience. As a few of you may have deduced, the librarian in question was Val Sussman nee Ontell and the con was the 1983 Lunacon in Hasbrouck Heights, NJ. My first real SF con also was my first exposure to a weapons policy, ("peace-bonding" in those days) as well as my first exposure to filksinging. (Finally! I knew I'd get to the point soon.) There was a piano in the lobby that a large group of fans gathered around to sing songs. Most came from the NESFA and Westerfilk hymnals. I remember "Banned From Argo" was popular on both nights.

Lunacon became an annual event for me, with the exception of 1986. (I had just started working for ~~The Transit~~ AFROCON and couldn't get the weekend off.) At each one I went to the filksing and sang along, occasionally picking but rarely playing. I also started taping the proceedings and buying filkbooks. Occassionally I would pick up some fannish history and lore between songs.

Deciding to go out on a limb, I attended the 1989 Worldcon in Boston. It was a lucky break that the con had a strong commitment to filking. I had only been exposed to bardic and chaos at Lunacon, and had never heard of filk concerts, one shots, and rendezvous filksings. The first night I attended a bardic/chaos filk, where I found myself accompanying Roberta on a couple of her songs with a twin pak of Tic Tacs. (Poor fan's maracas) The second night I sat in on a concert given by Windbourne, the "Folksingers of the Future". They had a gentle way of coaxing the shy people (like me) out of the corners. The band introduced themselves, then went around the room having each fan introduce themself. They encouraged everyone to sing along, or to at least hum or clap. They also had everyone move in closer together as a group, with the few scared souls on the fringes gently coaxed in. Windbourne's friendly reception was a welcome change from the bardic circles of the previous two Lunacons, where myself and several other fans had been blindsided by more experienced singers who swiped our turns or jumped in when we were caught on a lyric. Windbourne's hospitality was the first step in my shell of shyness being cracked.

The third night I sat in on the rendezvous, which was several big name filkers picking and playing the songs while everyone else sang along. The BNPs included Bill and Brenda Sutton, Dave Clement, Duane Elms, TJ and Mitchell Burnside Clapp, Bill Roper, and others. Highlights included "Madeira, My Dear" and "I Don't Do Dylan" done as a sort of wild performance art, replete with insults and bad puns; Brenda Sutton getting the whole room into a rousing rendition of "Strangers No More" that shook the ceiling, and Carol Roper's beautiful performance of "Crystal Blue Waters". Musically the best night of the con for me.

After Sunday night's masquerade, I wandered into a room in time for the end of the Technical Difficulties concert. I stayed for the chaos that followed.. It included several wonderful songs by Mike Stein (Not All Songs Are For Heroes" left me breathless), a round of songs about the subway and the LIRR, and a slew of showstoppers. The "subway set" gave me a moment in the spotlight. In the wake of "Change at Jamaica" and "Swing Low Sweet AA", I improvised a verse and announced that I worked for the NYCTA. I was greeted with boos and a chorus of "Darth Vader's March". The fact that I was wearing a skull and crossbones outfit and that my name badge said "Jamaica, NY" inspired a few

choice comments. Later on I tossed out a instafilk verse for "Mama Don't Allow" and a couple of showstoppers. I resolved to try to contribute more often at filksings.

Next Lunacon I tossed out a few showstoppers and contributed a verse to the 20+ minute rendition of "Drunken Sailor/Teenage Ensign" that popped out of nowhere, and tried my hand at singing a few Duane Elms songs. I also found myself in the unusual position of explaining the reason why the request for the song that was described by the requestor as "I don't know the title, but it goes 'someone doesn't want us anymore'" got the rather explosive response it did. (We sang it anyway.) At my first I-CON the following month, I tossed out the first verse and chorus of "Subway Rider's Prayer" to very favorable response. (Big surprise. I instafilked it and it sucked, in my opinion. I subsequently revamped it, and wrote a whole song.)

Then came the moment of truth. At Lunacon and Worldcon a lady had been trying to sell memberships for an East Coast filk con. I had declined as I had no idea of whether I would be able to get the day off. I kept the flyer though, and eventually decided to take the plunge. I wrote a total of five songs for the con. On the Greyhound up I read about the latest oil spill in the Kill Van Kull and remembered the mini-songwriting session at the Saturday night filksing at Lunacon that attempted to create an Exxon Valdez to the tunes of "Ship Titanic" and "Dawson's Christian". (A filk, not an oil spill.) I scribbled a song in less than five minutes, surprising myself.

I had had to work the Friday of the con, and arrived Saturday during a relative lull, when workshops were going on. I bought some tapes and songbooks in the small dealers room, and passed out some chocolate chip cookies I had baked. (I did it at that year's Lunacon and I-CON, and found plenty of takers. While waiting for the Guest of Honor concert to begin, I saw a sign-up sheet for "concert slots" on a table. Figuring I would chicken out if I didn't put it in writing, I wrote my name, sealing my fate.

That first East Coast filk con, ConCerto by name, had as its Guests of Honor two ladies named Linda Melnick and Kathy Mar. The former I remembered from the Technical Difficulties concert at Worldcon, while the latter was unknown to me. Their concert consisted mostly of old folksongs I recognized. This and the fact that they encouraged the audience to sing along calmed me down slightly. After closing the show with a rousing rendition of "Blowin' In The Wind", we all left for dinner before the concert sets were to begin. I drew my entry for the "Theme One Shots" for the next day, (having calmed down, I got reckless) and got "a famous filksinger". The only filker I knew to be famous was Leslie Fish, and she seemed too obvious a target. Mulling it over, I went to the hotel restaurant for what was a familiar scene-- me eating alone while groups of fan laughed and talked around me. While waiting for my order and scribbling a few random Fish thoughts, a voice asked "Can we join you?". I looked up to see Lenny Provenzano, a fan who I had spoken to in the hallway before the GOH concert. He had recognized me from that year's Lunacon masquerade (my first) which was surprising since I was dressed as The Green Hornet then, and kept the mask on most of the time backstage. (Lenny had been (un?)official masquerade photographer.) He introduced his friend Frank Mann, and we commenced to laugh and talk while waiting for the waiter. They weren't entered in the set concert, but they wished me luck. The dinner and conversation helped calm me down again.

Until the concert began. I had been prepared to hear people who sang better than I did, but EVERYBODY was MUCH better! Even the two entrants whose voices were not MUCH better than mine could play instruments to compensate. I was the 17th entry out of 19, so I sat

in my corner recording the proceedings, trying hard not to bolt from the convention entirely. I kept singing a song I had heard at Worldcon called "Take A Step" to myself over and over. (The chorus goes, in part, "You don't have to have the finest voice to be able to call your tune". This became my mantra during those hellish hours before my turn came. Things weren't helped by Mike Stein introducing his set, "These songs all have one thing in common. I haven't practiced any of them," and then blowing away the crowd. When I heard the magnificent harmonies of Musical Chairs, I was ready to open my veins in the corner. I was chugging water to ease the clenching in my throat, then running to the bathroom. (Somehow dinner stayed down.)

Then it was the moment of truth. Zero hour. Sink or swim. Time to fish or cut bait. Do or die. It was Slot #17. My turn.

I stumbled through my introduction about how I was going to do a completely "Acapulco" set, (hard to sing and play the harmonica at the same time) and that while I couldn't sing worth a lick, I hoped that they would enjoy the lyrics I had written. My first song, about movie sequels, sung to "Nobody's Moggy" as done by Mitchell Burnside Clapp, was a flop in my opinion. Only four or five people laughed, and I thought it was one of my better efforts. Nonetheless, I received generous applause. I then asked the audience, mostly to calm my nerves, "How many of you are from the New York area?". (The con was held in Cherry Hill, NJ.) When asked to define New York area", I replied that I meant you took mass transit daily. This led to the comment "Mass Transit" and several mumbled insults about same. When I told them that I worked for the company and sympathized with them, I. Abra Cinii, who I had been acquainted with since my first Lunacon and KNEW I worked for NYCTA, said in mock astonishment, "You are of the camp of the enemy?". I said, playing along, "Don't torture me, please." Someone called for defenestration, which got a laugh when another fan pointed out we were on the ground floor. The statement was amended to include taking me to the roof prior to dropping. I then launched into "Subway Rider's Prayer", (the rewritten, totally revamped version) which got good results. The last line, which called for replacing Charon (Hell's Ferryman) with "the managers and chairmen of the NYCTA" got a wild chorus of cheers and applause. I also noticed that people were singing along with the chorus. Feeling a bit calmer, I introduced "Pleaides", my Challenger tribute. I had written the first and last verses two weeks after that sad day, and had finished it only days before the con. As I sang it as best as I could, (my voice didn't improve as the set progressed, and the original tune---Dan Fogelberg's "Same Old Lang Syne"---is not written for amateurs) I realized that the whole room was listening. Not like to my other songs, but listening in rapt attention. When I finished, there was a two second pause, and then applause. Not the wild cheering type that "Prayer" had gotten, but a slow crescendo that seemed to say "Well done, young fan". Deciding to close with an attack on the funnybone, I went into the oil spill song I had composed on the way to the con. After recapping the Valdez and Kill Van Kull spills, I introduced my song as being written to a tune about a certain famous wayward vessel, and then sang. After the first line, the crowd recognized the tune as the "Gilligan's Island" theme, cracked up, and hummed along. I finished the song and my set to more cheers and applause than I ever thought I would receive. I had survived. And apparently impressed. Greg Baker introduced his Chernobyl song "The Intourist Guide" with a reference to the other "ecofolk" songs, and the Virtual Orchestra opened "Jumping a Turnstile" with "There's somebody here who knows all about the subway's policy toward big bills". I don't know if they had originally planned to do those songs, but the introductions earned me several stares. When the concert closed with performances

of "The Fannish Orchestra" and "The Hallelujah Chorus", I sat in on the chaos that followed until nearly 5:00am. In my hotel room I worked on my entry for the One Shots until about 7:00am, and rested for two hours before going to the Musical Chairs rehearsal (where the combination of the trio's vocals and Linda Melnick's signed performance on "Lies" and "Cranes Over Hiroshima" had the room in tears) and a couple music workshops.

Prior to the One Shots I checked with Roberta Rogow for technical details about Leslie Fish's sad fate at Nolacon II, (most of which came from her "Ballad of the Pousse Cafe" and "A Tribute to Nolacon II") and with Abby for the correct tune for my song. I had written it to "Where Is Captain James T. Kirk?", which I had heard her sing at Worldcon. Her song was written to the tune of "Rabbi Finkelman" by Andy Breckman. Her input helped me to tighten up the scansion and improve the rhyme scheme. While waiting for my turn, a truly horrendous pun struck me (Ouch!) and I hastily rewrote the last verse. Debating the titular possibilities, I chose "'Maestro" Leslie Fish" over 'Madame'. (I have since gone to 'Madame', foregoing good taste in favor of better scansion.) The song went over well; the pun was as atrocious as I had hoped. Abby and her cohorts provided much needed choral support. Later in the con suite Deb Wunder, one of these cohorts, gave me the lowdown on NYUSFS, the New York fan group. She became the fourth or fifth person to invite me to join over the years. I finally got around to joining shortly after Worldcon that year.

Which is a story for another issue. I've gone on entirely too long about the past, and would like to bore you now with more recent developments. I have made a slight name for myself with my songs "Hobbes the Magic Tiger" and "Mister Henson's Hands". (A very slight name. Several people have said they liked them, and someone at I-CON this year said he had been depressed ever since he heard "Hobbes" at Arisia. Don't ask me why. If he wants a depressing Calvin and Hobbes song, he should hear my "Mommy's Little Boy".) Having other people sing my songs (the good ones at any rate) seems to get better results than me singing them. I'm still determined to sing them someday, so much so that I've been practicing on my electronic keyboard. I've also got my old guitar restrung, but it's just sitting in the corner mocking me. For now. I seem to have gained a name for my baking, as I always shlep several dozen cookies to cons and other fannish functions. Mark Blackman of this apa's "Singspiel" dubbed me "Count Spatula" on the way to Disclave this year. I've always wanted a fannish name to put on my con badges, and that one is a dilly. Mark's also the one who got me to join APA-FILK, so you can send HIM the hate mail!

Lately I've been collaborating with two very talented ladies. One is Rennie Levine, who is one of the most twisted talents I have ever seen. If Kanesky is warped, Levine is totally fractured. She can make you bust a gut over songs like "Robbing the Graveyard" and "Circle Jerk", and then tug your heartstrings with her beautiful "Cruzan" and "God Lives In Terror". As for "Ponder-Ose-a", it's a case...forget it. I'm not gonna try to tell about THAT one! In addition to her songwriting talents, Rennie has a nice voice and has been reactivating her dormant talents with a steel-strung six-string. (Say that six times fast)

Rennie's partner in crime (they both work in the Criminal Court system) and rhyme (amazing harmonies) is Susan Knapp. Sue is proficient in the workings of piano and guitar, and judging by her performance at various cons has a very nice voice. Or so I thought until I heard her at the upright at a songwriting session last Sun-

day at her parents' house. Whether with a Broadway show tune or a Rennie Levine original, the lady stuns the senses. And judging by her own handful of original songs and her contributions to the collaborative songs(which should be ready by Phrolicon, which is tomorrow 7/26/91 as I write this) she is a force to be reckoned with.. She's offered to help me learn piano and guitar, so maybe she can teach me to sing.(You in the back--stop snickering!) We have made plans to attend ConChord in Los Angeles in September, (tentative) and hopefully we will be a lean mean filking machine by then. Rennie's "Robbing The Graveyard" went over quite well at Consonance in San Francisco this past March, and on a recent trip to England I left it and a few others at a British filk meeting in a pub, with hilarious results.(A literal domino effect around the table, as the lyric sheets went around.)

So, while it has taken a rather long time to break out of my shell(albeit not completely), I think it has been a worthwhile experience, if only for the people I have met along the way. I hope to expand on some of them next issue, as well as report on up coming cons and do some mailing comments.

In the meantime, the following filksongs and con reports appeared in various issues of APA-NYU. Since I have mentioned them in this zine, you might as well get the whole enchilada.

Hope to see you all in '90. And hopefully at conventions before then.

Music: PUFF by Peter
Yarrow and Leonard Lipton

HOBSES THE MAGIC TIGER by Mike Browne

Hobbes, the magic tiger, lives secretly
A plain old toy stuffed animal is all the grownups see
Little psycho Calvin would follow where he led
And battle living snowmen and the beasts under the bed
Oh Hobbes...(Chorus= First two lines repeated twice)

Together they would travel in a cardboard rocketship
Blazing on to give the evil alien hordes the slip
Martians, Glorbs, and Nagons would bow down in defeat
Swearing that one day they'd dine on boy and tiger meat

But Calvin's all grown up now, and Hobbes no longer plays
No more Captain Napalm or transmogrifier rays
One spring day it happened, Calvin's childhood reached the end
And dumb old Susie Derkins, became his new best friend
Yet Calvin still remembers all his childhood fun
When Spaceman Spiff would put those evil Zarches on the run
So he picked up a pen, and it's all for the best
For Calvin's now an old time pro and Worldcon writer guest

Music: MADAME CURIE'S HANDS

MISTER HENSON'S HANDS by Mike Browne

by Duane Elms

(This song works best when played to Duane's arrangement of the original tune, which, by the way, is LEADER OF THE BAND by Dan Fogelberg)

A quiet man of magic, young Jim Henson came to be.

And Sesame Street is the show that is his legacy.

We'll never know the reasons, or the fears he worked among,
To spend his life and talents on the teaching of the young.

He had no tools to start with, so he used his hands instead,
He'd wrap a sock around his hand, and a frog would lift it's head.
Soon many friendly creatures took their places in his world,
A place of joy and wonderment for every boy and girl.

He poured his heart and soul out into everything he made
His monsters all were friendly so no child would be afraid.
You would need an hourglass with an endless stream of sand,
To count the ones whose lives were touched by Mister Henson's hands.

He never thought of honors as he shaped each show with care,
Driven not by thought of cash, or a forty Nielsen share.
His life was stopped abruptly, as dedication took its toll.
Pneumonia cut his body down, but could not touch his soul.

Now some may call the Muppets only cloth and plastic parts,
But each one holds the essence of their master's gentle heart.
The torch has now been handed to his family and crew,
To follow in his footsteps and to Henson's dream stay true.

So thanks to all who teach the young to read and count and spell,
And thanks to those who forge on past the point at which he fell.
And most of all the children, when they learn and understand,
They are the living legacy of Mister Henson's hands.
The children are the legacy of Mister Henson's hands.

KNEE HIGH ZAPSY CHOTATRA #6

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I LEFT MY HEART IN SAN FRANCISCO: Actually, I kept the old ticker and left my troubles at San Francisco International en route to Oakland for Consonance, the West Coast filk convention. Having wangled a day off on the Sunday of the con, I set out for Newark Airport with cookies, muffins, and songbooks in tow, after finishing my shift at work on Friday morning. After going 48 hours sans shut-eye, I surprised myself by sleeping for most of the flight, despite the distractions of both the in-flight movie (MERMAIDS with Cher and Bob Hoskins) and the muttered cursing of the businessman on the aisle, whose laptop computer self-destructed shortly after takeoff. After touching down from the friendly skies, I waited nearly an hour for the shuttle bus to Oakland Airport, which was driven by an old man who must have been auditioning for the next Mad Max film, considering how recklessly he drove. From Oakland Airport I took another shuttle that passed right by the con hotel and dropped me off at a bus stop about ~~1/2~~ of a mile away. The driver wouldn't let me out at the hotel, even though we were stopped at a red light. Mundanes.

After staggering to the Holiday Inn with my burdens, I registered for the con and met Lee Gold, who was running over the concert schedule. We caught up on our respective activities since Worldcon and made plans to meet later at the welcome party, where she promised to introduce me to the West Coast filkers. Trying to economize on lodging to make up for the cost of the flight, I shunned the Inn and went around two corners to a Motel 6, where I got one of the last available rooms. Unlike the folksy radio commercials, this motel was run by a vindictive harpy of a woman who demanded to know why I did not have a car or driver's license. ("This is a MO-tel, kid! Get it? MO-tel!") Even when I produced my passport to show that I was an American citizen, the old grouch wasn't satisfied. Wait'll Tom Bodet hears about this!

At the 1988 Worldcon in New Orleans, the con hotel was swarming with Baptist preachers and missionaries. At Consonance, we were sharing space with the Democratic Party National Candidates. (Which is why the Motel 6 and other economy hotels were booked up.) Their function rooms were down the hall from the main singing rooms, resulting in a few brave souls checking out the bardic circle over the course of the weekend. To the best of my knowledge, there were no defections from either side.

I checked out the con suite, where I ended up explaining the details of the bathtub drain to the person in charge, who was trying to fill the tub for her daughter's bath. (Why do Holiday Inns have bathtub drains that require multiple twists and turns to operate. And why is the damn lightswitch out in the hall?) I then checked out the dealers room, where I passed around the munchies and finally, after eight years of going to cons, meeting the legendary Leslie Fish. She liked the cookies. After dinner, I went to the welcome party, where Lee and her husband Barry were true to their word, introducing me to Bob Kanefsky, Jane Mailander, Joey Shoji, and Dr. Jane Robinson.

The guest of honor was British filk maven Gytha North, who I had met in Holland. She was ecstatic to see the Golds and yours truly, as she was suffering the combined effects of an absence of familiar faces and a strict "no smoking" policy. We caught up on what British filkdom was up to. Their annual filkcon had been a success, despite a large

number of cancellations due to the Persian Gulf crisis. Bill Sutton, the GOH, had made quite an impression on the Brits, who hope to get more Americans over there next year. Gytha is hoping that Bob Kanefsky will come over to England and hook up with his counterpart, Zander Nyrond. She believes the two of them together would be apocalyptic.

The official filking began at 9:00pm, with rooms for bardic circle, chaos, and a singalong workshop. I followed the Golds to the bardic, as they had warned that the chaos folks tended to be dominated by a handful of people. The room was following what Lee described as "non-topological" bardic. Everyone who entered was given three poker chips. The circle went around and you picked, passed, or played, tossing a chip into the middle of the circle. The circle would accomodate followups to songs as long as a chip was tossed in. In other words, the format was not strict bardic. For example, someone sang "Little Fuzzy Dinosaurs". I tossed in my chip to sing a followup about a little fuzzy tiger, namely "Hobbes the Magic Tiger". That inspired someone on the other side of the room to toss in a chip and request another Calvin and Hobbes filk, "Classroom Fantasy" by Bob Kanefsky. The circle went around until all present had used their red chip, then continued with white and blue chips. Chips could be given away or loaned to people who wanted to do a followup after using their turn. They were flipped or tossed into the center of the circle, to a chorus of "Incoming!" and comments about SCUD poker chips. Leslie Fish spent most of the evening arranging the chips into a pentagram of sorts. As with Encore and Taboo, once you see it you'll understand.

Besides the Golds and Leslie, in attendance at the bardic were Jane Mailander, Mike Leiberman, the group Windbourne and many others. The first half of the night drifted between the songs of Fred Small, Leslie, the Golds, and Kanefsky, for the most part. The rest was a melange of original material and old standards. "Hobbes" was warmly received, and my rendition of Rennie Levine's "Robbing the Graveyard" had the crowd split evenly between groans and guffaws. (A tribute to Rennie's words, not my voice.) Several people suggested that the song be used in the panel "Is Nothing Sacred?" the next day. It was, and the general consensus was that there is nothing sacred to filkers. The cookies and muffins were enjoyed by all, and the Tully by a few. (Leslie had a neighbor's supply within reach. She also neatly circumvented the no smoking rule with a battery powered smokeless ashtray, and exhaling at an overhead ceiling vent. Nobody complained. Too much.) I staggered out about 4:00am, and the circle was still going.

Rising from my coma about 11:00am, I worked through the dealers room, picking up several Golden Bough and Eric Bogle albums, and hit the con suite for brunch, where I replenished the dwindling supply of munchies I had left there the previous evening and indulged in the sumptuous spread before me. (Which included some incredibly tasty chocolate cupcakes that were decorated in designs that were so pretty you felt guilty eating them.) The concert began at 1:00pm, with Windbourne opening the show with Fred Small's "Big Italian Rose" and closing the set with an original number called "Rainbows In The Sand", which was a ballad for racial harmony that wasn't preachy or

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maudlin. Next up were the L.A. Filkharmonics, who cracked up the crowd in seven-part harmony. Gytha North the GOH followed with a set of traditional ballads, some Viking anthems, and a pair of ripping ditties about a drug-peddling Robin Hood and a bunch of leather wearing, booze swilling teddy bears, respectively. Barry Gold did a set of his wife's latest, and Mara Brenner followed with her amazing autoharp and rib-tickling songs. I ducked out for a while to eat and chat with Gytha, and returned in time for sets by Dr. Jane(mostly about science) and Steve Savitzky(mostly about computers). Next came a double dose of Celtic music from the groups Magic Fire and Daoine Sidhe. Kathy Mar came on next, dressed in love beads, peace symbols, and face paint. She did a set of protest songs that had the room on the brink of tears, with her husband accompanying her on violin. It was the high point of the weekend. After a technofilk set by Jordin Kare, Gytha came back out for a second set of ditties, including the British equivalent of "Banned From Argo", the dreaded "Before The Dawn".(Eeek.) This rather decent song has spawned a self-contained universe of 62 songs.(As of last years Worldcon. I forgot to ask Gytha if any new ones had been accepted by the entance committee. Which is a story in itself.) Also in the concert were Heather Rose Jones, "Bear" Breen, and Burrill & Glass; all of whom I missed due to my ducking out.

After dinner I hit the Performers Circle, where Windbourne was doing a set. They were followed by Joey Shoji and Kristoph Klover, who led the room in some of the best harmonies I have heard yet. The room soon turned into chaos, but what chaos! An incredibly soulful rendition of "Minnie the Moocher", (it works as a filk!) a three part round composed of Dan Quayle gaffes, and Harold Groot winging and swishing his way through, respectively, "Baby Vampire Boogie" and "Gay Vampire Boogie", complete with audience participation. The weirdest number of the night had to be "The Ninja and Samurai Sam", a 37 verse epic ballad that is performed as a sort of combination of THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW and an EYE OF ARGON reading. The performance took over 30 minutes and featured Jordin Kare on guitar, Harold Groot as the ninja, and all present as the various sundry characters. It was videotaped for posterity(or blackmail purposes) and was certainly the weirdest event at the con. Shortly after this I went to the bardic room to finish out the night. Leslie Fish and the Golds dominated here, with most of the incoming chips being requests for old standards and new material. I requested "Captain Wilton Parmenter", which Leslie honored cheerfully and even credited Messers. Rubin and Bartilucci. The room cracked up at the "Cop Rock" lyric, and Leslie clucked during the chorus. I paid her tribute with two glasses of Tully over the course of the night. Leslie takes a large glass filled with ice and pours the Dew slowly over it, so that the melting ice retains the flavor. (I figured she took it through an IV bag.) The only low point of the weekend (other than it ending) was when a filkhog took the song I was singing and changed the tempo. He was much louder than the rest of us, so the result was a mess. He also stopped cold to make jokes, and ended up destroying the punchline in the last lyric. A couple of fen who had joined in with me (at the right tempo) said there was no use trying to reason with him; that it was a regular occurrence. I was tempted to garrote him with an E string, but cooler heads prevailed. I got revenge of sorts by performing "Write In C" solo. When I introduced the song, he made a beeline for my lyric sheet and I told him to stay away.(Politely) He got the message.

Morning found me in wandering mode; through the dealers room to the Technofilk set (featuring Steve Savitzky and Jordin Kare) to the con suite and back. Over the course of the morning I managed to run off copies of Rennie Levine's songs for Leslie Fish, give Jordin a copy of "Do It Yourself--Part II" after he sang the original, and win the auction of the fancy kites that hung from the ceiling in the main concert room. The one I won has a Pegasus on it, and a long set of streamers. (Now if I could just get a day off to fly it.) The one-shots were rather embarrassing, considering the performers outnumbered the audience! A pity, because the songs were quite good. My favorite song was "L Ron Ron" by Lynn Gold. Leslie Fish and Mike Leiberman performed "Susan B." with Mike in T-shirt and shorts and Leslie in the black leather tank top and pants she had worn all weekend. (At a previous con, Leslie had sung the man's part and Mike had sung the woman's in drag) Later on I caught the end of a performers circle led by Gytha, and then sat in on the Celtic jam featuring members of Magic Fire and Daoine Sidhe, along with Heather Rose Jones and others. Joey Shoji performed next as part of a nostalgia set that included the whole "Horse-Tamer's Daughter". (As with "The Filk From Hell", we sang the chorus only every five verses or so.) It worked rather well.

The last event consisted of Kathy Mar and a few fan sitting around talking and occasionally playing, while bugging Kathy's son Nick, who was rebounding around the room like a Tasmanian Devil. (Ethan we hardly knew ye.) I had to leave at 7:00pm to get to the airport in time for the redeye. I searched for Gytha to say good-bye, but couldn't find her. Managed to get to the airport with minutes to spare. Managed to sleep most of the flight. (Through "Three Men and a Little Lady" this time).

All in all, a worthwhile trip. I was the only Noo Yawker there, and possibly the only fan from the Eastern Seaboard. Now I have to try and make it to ConChord. With ConCerto dead this year and FilkOntario looking very slim right now, it may be the only filk con available. At least the Golds offered me crash space. (They live about ten minutes from the hotel.)

Whew! Finally a zine that is more than a page long. I never thought I'd see one this long again, given my current schedule. Between work and experimenting in the ~~Laboratory~~ kitchen on a special treat for the 17th. annish (including an Ethan/Donna tolerable recipe), I have no time for mailing comments. At this rate, Glasser will pull ahead of me.

See you all whenever!

KNEE HIGH & A PSYCHOPATH #7

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THIS IS BORING: A lyric that perfectly describes this year's Lunacon, as far as I was concerned. Bad enough that the only two panels I was interested in were cancelled, the film program consisted of the usual dreck (with the exception of GODZILLA VERSUS BIOLANTE and a few Jay Ward cartoons), and the Japanamation was all old stuff I had already seen, but the con hotel was a LONG walk from the train station. It's bad enough when the con is boring, but to have to walk so far for boredom? Sheesh! On the plus side the filking was excellent, making up for the con's shortcomings. (A trend I have noticed recently.) I performed a few of the filks I had heard at Consonance, ("L. Ron Ron" by Lynn Gold and "Brush Up Your SF" by the L.A. Filkharmonics) and got needled by a fan who hadn't been able to attend. (Nicely needled, though.) Sue Knapp sang "Hobbes the Magic Tiger" very nicely. She pronounced "Nagons" wrong (her fault) and sang the last verse as two separate pieces, (my fault) but no one minded. (Lord knows she did a better job than I could have.) Sue's performance of Rennie Levine's "Robbing the Graveyard" cracked up all in attendance. Lisa, Mordecai, Harold, Mike Rubin, and Avram were all in fine form (especially Avi) and the Virtual Orchestra dropped in for a set on Saturday night. Non-NYUSFS types in attendance included Jane Sibley, Kathy Sands, Frank Mann, Lenny Provenzano, and Helva Peters. Helva sang "Moggies in the Night", a British filk I had told her about at Arisia. It went over quite well. (As does everything Helva plays.) One slightly amusing moment came on Saturday night, when the filkroom was occupied by a panel run by a woman in Vulcan garb, who was talking about Vulcan healing, science, etc. She was heavily in character, and the audience was responding in kind. She went a good 20 minutes past her time, resulting in much foot and watch tapping, throat clearing, and waving before she got the idea that her time was up. I commented that I never thought I'd agree with William Shatner, but it was time for her to "get a life and move out of her parents' basement." That got a laugh or two. (And whose bright idea was it to start the filking at 1:00am anyway?) To stave off withdrawl, an impromptu filksing was started in the lounge area outside the art show. It consisted of Kathy Sands, a fan named Mitchell, (can't remember his last name; he's a SCAdian and a former Black Beret) me, and someone who I met at Consonance but can't remember the name either. We basically sat and talked, occasionally bursting into song at appropriate moments. Frank, Lenny, and others dropped in for a while at various times. I wrote three verses of a song called "Saddam's Privateers" to the obvious tune. The main topics of conversation were Desert Storm, the lamented passing of Concerto, raising kids as pagans, and the fistfight that erupted at the panel "Is Violence Necessary?". We agreed they'd answered their own question.

Full I-CON report next month. (I hope) Take care, all.

Late Bulletin! Bill Watterson is taking a nine month sabbatical from "Calvin and Hobbes" as of Sunday 5/5/91. Let's hope we can survive (and that he doesn't come back second-rate like Trudeau and Breathed). Bye!

KNEE HIGH & A PSYCHOPATH #9

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ALL IN ALL IT'S JUST ANOTHER FILK IN THE HALL: The trip to I-CON started off on the wrong foot. Literally. I met Susan Knapp and Dan Kachoogian at Sue's parents' house Friday evening. After the gear was stowed, we started tossing an Aerobie around. While running to make a catch, I ran into a tree stump and succeeded in smashing my right big toe. (And I had the right of way!) Nearly six weeks after the fact it is still a lovely shade of purple, although it no longer hurts to walk. We hit the road soon after and arrived at SUNY Stony Brook about 9:30pm, after following some of the tiniest highway signs in the Western Hemisphere to get to the campus, and then wandering around blindly until we found the right building. Once inside we quickly registered and met with Bruce Adelsohn and Frank Mann, who directed us to the filksing. (True filkers, we had arrived at the con less than 20 minutes before the filksing began.)

Last year, the concom had provided an open-air non-smoking lounge for the filksing, complete with couches, chairs and water pitchers. (But no electrical outlets!) This time around the filksing was held in an alcove above the registration area, where about 50 of us squeezed in. There were few chairs, so some people sat on tables along the wall. There were enough outlets, though.

Outside of Dan, Sue, Bruce, Frank and yours truly, the only filkers who came armed with songs were Dave Weingart and Amy Cott. The only pro in attendance was Duane Elms, who started things rolling with a group singalong of "Old MacDonald" in Old Latin. (The translation having first popped up at FilkOntario.) Things quickly degenerated from there, to everyone's delight. We found ourselves in the enviable position of semi-pros, as most of those in attendance were content to sit back and follow our lead. Outside of the odd request and occasional new song, those mentioned above basically ran the show. Duane was more relaxed than he had been at Arisia, playing stuff he had never played at cons before, including some unpublished material. He also made several humorous asides throughout the weekend. Sue played Rennie Levine's and my songs, with the usual good results. ("Robbing the Graveyard" had the group in convulsions, as always.) Dave tossed in his computer songs, and Amy came up with some real gut-busters, including "The Horny Young Man" and a song about how her friend made a piano out of Budweiser cans, and played it at Avery Fisher Hall. She had a picture to prove it. Lenny Provenzano showed up about midnight with some new ditties, including "Bomb Around the Clock" and "The Wacky Iraqi". Duane honored my request to play "Mister Henson's Hands", (which Lenny followed up with "Come Ye Muppets") and the song I wrote about "Fuel To Feed The Drive" parodies. (Which is written to "Dawson's Christian".) It was nice to hear both songs done right for once. Duane also threw out "The Wizard" by Paul Espinoza and a Ray Stevens song with an incredibly long title. I still can't make it out on the tape, but the chorus is the title followed by "Meanwhile back at the motel", leading into one of the song's characters yelling at the telephone operator. It was a real trip. Sue and I massacred "Lord of Time" and "The Armageddon Rag", and I did an a cappella rendition of "Railroad Bill".

The filking was so good that it made our location all the more intolerable, as we had to sing over crowd noise, screams, PA announcements, and obnoxiously loud people crowded on the stairways. The filking ended comparatively early on both nights; before 2:30 am.

We had come up sans accomadations, but lucked out. Dan and Sue stayed at Bruces parents' house, (in exchange for rides to and from campus) while I crashed with Frank and Lenny. The rest of the con was nice. The dealers room was enormous, the handful of panels I attended were interesting, and I sat in on talks by Dean Stockwell, Wings Hauser, and Harlan Ellison. Harlan comes across far less obnoxiously in person than he does in print. The only real meal I had the whole weekend was a very nice Chinese dinner on the way home with Dan, Sue and Frank. I survived on my own baked goods, as did most of the filkers. All in all, a good con.

I HAD A GOOD DAY: The night after I-CON I went to see Andy Breckman, who was opening for Acoustic Thunder at The Bottom Line. The Glasser-Camps were in attendance, as were Deb Wunder and Christine Quinones. Our little entourage provided choral and moral support for Andy, as well as giving him his patter for the set. Ethan was drafted as straight man for "The Circus Song", and Andy made several references to "the gang at Table Eight" between numbers. Afterward he came out to talk with us and autograph the CDs we bought after the show. Well worth the price of admission.

THERE WILL DEFINITELY BE A PARTY TONIGHT: On the heels of their highly successful St. Patrick's Day party, Dan and Sue threw caution (and sanity) to the wind and held their first (and hopefully not last) Apartmentcon, a three day long video, food, pun, and bug the catsfestival. While not on the grand scale of BeyondtheCon, it was a very enjoyable weekend, marred by only one loud and overly talkative guest. (We all know who THAT is!) There were good movies, cartoons, some hilarious animation from the "Spike and Mike" animation festival, a mini-marathon of "Kida In The Hall", and a Saturday midnight presentation of "The Rocky Horror Picture Show". We used my laserdisc copy, which featured Japanese subtitles and the "Super Heroes" ending. Sue and Bruce provided previously unheard (by the rest of us) patter, and it was fun to hear how everybody's comments varied, depending on where they had seen it. As far as I remember, Dan and I were the only virgins in attendance. I managed to slip into the kitchen during "Willow" to whip up some pinwheel cookies, which were baked and served during "Heathers". The 14 dozen chocolate chip cookies lasted almost the entire weekend. While the Encore game, filksing, and songwriting workshop didn't pan out, it was a good weekend. Host, hostess, and feline deities were patient and took care of all who entered their domain. I can't wait until the next one. And (he said with dread in his heart) I plan to put on one at my place, once I get it excavated. (See Dan, Sue, Mordecai or Mark Blackman for vivid descriptions of the vast wreckage that greeted their respective visits. WARNING: The descriptions should not be given to the faint of heart or the extremely fastidious neatniks in NYUSFS. (If there are any.)

MARYLAND, MY MARYLAND: One short week after Apartmentcon was Dis-clave. I found myself in a car with the aforementioned Mordecai and Mark. The ride involved us getting lost locationally challenged a couple of times, but we arrived more or less intact. I spent most of the ride stretched out in the back seat, having finished work only hours earlier.. At the beginning of the ride, Mark hung the handle "Count Spatula" on me after I mentioned that I was carrying 16 dozen cookies. I guess I now have a fannish name to put on my badges. Mordecai and I were staying in a Holiday Inn about five minutes walk from the con hotel. After registering, we cleaned up and headed out. I dropped off some cookies at the con suite, receiving my International Cookie Conspiracy button in the process, went out for some Chinese food, and went to the filksing.

I had been told that Disclave had had some very good filking in previous years. What I hadn't been told was that the Hotel's green room doubled as the filkroom. The large conference table in the middle of the floor made things a bit awkward. Filkers in attendance the first night included Helva Peters, Claire Maier, Perianne Lurie, Mary Christ, Spike Y. Jones, and several people I didn't know. Chaos was the order of the day, and lack of filk etiquette was the watchword. When I asked Helva to perform "The Dream" by Karen Trimble, several people crowded around halfway through and wrecked it. When I asked for help with the chorus on "Robbing the Graveyard", the same people stampeded over and hogged the whole song. There was also too much talking during songs. The cumulative effect was rather annoying. Things improved when midnight came. Most of the filkhogs left and Mike Stein arrived, followed in short order by Sue, Abby, Avi, Christine, and Rennie. This new group produced some amazing harmonies on "Swing Low, Sweet AA", "Oh Holy Shit", and other songs. Avi had everyone on the floor with "Shoddy Gifts", (I want the words!) and I got similiar results when I performed Harold Feld's condensed version of "Horse Tamer's Daughter", which is called "Like Comyn to the Slaughter". Mike Stein provided guitar accompaniment, and then performed the basis for the parody; Frank Hayes' condensed version of "Matty Groves", which is called "Like A Lamb To The Slaughter". His performance put everyone back on the floor. Claire Maier suggested that Harold change the title of his song to "Like A Lamb to the Daughter". Things turned slightly raunchy with performances of "The Ball of Cyrramyr" and "The Good Ship Venus". (aka "Frigging in the Rigging") We got tossed out at 3:30am so the hotel staff could go home. I hitched a ride with Rennie and Sue back to our hotel, where we stayed up until past 5:30am talking, listening to some songs Sue was working on, and making plans for the next day. I was drafted as critic for the first draft of "Abby's Got New Genitalia", the song Rennie, Sue, Avi, and Christine had cobbled together on the drive from New York, in honor of Abby's successful upgrading of equipment. I was pleased to be the first to hear it, and found the groups' initial result hysterical.

Saturday began at about 4:00pm, when Sue woke me up by calling my room. Apparently the lack of sleep the previous week, when I had spent every spare moment baking, had caught up with me. I was miffed at missing Linda Melnick's sign language panel, not to mention the planned shopping spree in the dealers room. Next time I'll put in for a wake up call. When I got to Sue and Rennie's room, they were making filk buttons and polishing up Abby's song. I got to see and hear the finished products, and both results were spectacular. Most of NYUSFS had arrived late at night, and were going to an all-you-can-eat seafood place for dinner. Since they had no vegetarian menu

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for Sue, we hit "The Good Earth", a Chinese restaurant several doors down. We had the entire back room to ourselves, the staff was very accomadating, (they put bean curd in Sue's order and made a no-alcohol strawberry daquiri without fuss or bother) the prices were reasonable and the portions were HUGE. Everybody got one entree and traded back and forth, and even without soups or appetizers we were bloated when the fortune cookies arrived. Needless to say we came back the next night. We came up with several filk button slogans while eating, and made plans to hit the nearby copy center the following day.

I had brought three Black Forest Cake layers from New York, (the sole survivors from Apartmentcon) planning to fix up a treat for the filkers. When I was told a party had been planned for Abby on Saturday night, I checked with the guest of honor to see if a Black Forest Cake would do, she said, "Chocolate good, whipped cream bad." Prior to dinner I had checked a store near the restaurant for frosting ingredients to no avail. I ended up dropping off cookies at the party and running to a nearby market for a tub of Betty Crocker RTS.

I frosted the cake in the middle of the party while everyone congratulated Abby. I personally hated the idea of putting store-bought frosting on a made-from-scratch cake, (do you know how hard it is to find good scratch these days?) but it would take too long to whip up scratch frosting. The cake seemed to go over well. I brought the leftover slices and a bag of cookies to the filksing, which had been moved to a hotel room on the second floor. Everybody sat on the beds or floor and sang. It was reminiscent of Games Night. I switched the tape in Sue's recorder while I was there. (The party had been scheduled opposite the filksing, so we had to duck in every now and then to change tapes.)

Sue and Rennie, who had been rehearsing throughout the day, performed their song to thunderous applause and laughter. Another fan named Cheryl, who had gone through the procedure before Abby, related her experiences and gave Abby a list of what to expect in years to come. She also gave the rest of us warning signs to watch out for; apparently 20% of sex change patients take themselves out of the lineup within two years of the procedure. (This information was found out the hard way, by losing several friends.) We all promised to keep an eye on Abby.

When we arrived at the filksing, Carol Kabakjian was in the middle of announcing the return of both "Philly Philk Flash" and ConCerto. The former would begin when she got some submissions, the latter was set for June '92 in Cherry Hill, NJ with Mitchell and T.J. Burnside-Clapp as Guests of Honor. I gave Carol copies of "Hobbes the Magic Tiger" and "Mister Henson's Hands", but I see trouble on the horizon. She seemed determined to credit the music to Dan Fogelberg only, and not to Duane Elms. My song is based on "Madame Curie's Hands", which is Duane's song. His is based on Fogelberg's "Leader of the Band", with different music, faster tempo, and different scansion. If you try to sing either filk to the original tune as written, the result is horrendous. (I ought to know. On Friday night, Mary Christ sang my filk to the original tune, despite my warning and the fact that Mike Stein was playing Duane's arrangement. The result was painful to listen to.

When the torture was over, I erased the song. (Something I rarely do.) Now, I wouldn't have written my song if I hadn't heard Duane's version. And since it is based on Duane's arrangement of Fogelberg's original tune, I feel both of them should be credited, as I have done on my lyric sheet. (See APA-NYU # 190 for your own copy.) I may be jumping the gun, but I believe in giving proper credit.

The biggest hit at the filksing that night, was Casey Sears, a 7 year old who absolutely captivated those in attendance with her charm and stunning renditions of "Wishful Thinking", "Mommy, Can I Have a Spaceship?", and "Flowers for Algernon". Rennie was so impressed she began writing a filk about her. (Which became "Little Casey Sears", to the tune of "So Long, Mom" by Tom Lehrer. Rennie sang it to child and mother Monday morning and they liked it.) Now if only we can get the kid to Concerto. The filksing went through requiems, cats, computers, and other fun topics. Avi brought some extremely tasty brownies along, (he made them with orange marmalade; an interesting complement to the chocolate) and the filking went on til 3:30am. As we left, Glenn Arthur and a bunch of fen arrived with instruments for a jam session. (It lasted until 5:00 or so.)

Sunday I wandered through the dealers room (buying forty Nancy buttons) and the Discave (dropping off cookies). I met Helva, who was waiting for the art auction to begin. She was kind enough to let me borrow her song binder, which I took to the copy place and ran off the best parts of. I got to the art auction in time to return the book and give her the new Calvin and Hobbes I had written with her in mind. (The music is "Daddy's Little Girl" by Julia Ecklar.) Actually, I finished writing the song during the auction and was rewriting it more or less neatly when Helva took a look at it and said, "I'd like a copy of that", not knowing I was writing it for her. I met Sue and Rennie soon after and returned to the hotel for more button making. En route to the aforementioned restaurant, we hit the copy place and ran off several sheets of buttons on the backs of flyers we stole liberated from the convention freebie tables. (The Philcon flyers were very pretty neon blue and pink.)

Greg Baker turned up at the filksing that night, as did many others. The room was packed to the walls and the air conditioner couldn't handle it. The chatter and filkhogging returned as well, on several occasions overstepping into plain rudeness. Most of us went to a hastily convened overflow filkroom on the seventh floor, which worked out nicely. Helva got to sing without being crowded and things were generally relaxed. Rennie and Sue performed their Abby song to the general audience, with the expected results. (Helva went through a medley of expressions; alternately amused, shocked, and wincing.) Claire asked me to perform "Where is Maestro Leslie Fish?", the song I had written for the Theme One-Shots at Concerto. She performed Roberta Rogow's "Ballad of the Pousse-Cafe" as an introduction, and explained the circumstances that inspired both songs. I changed the "Maestro" to "Madam", (which I think sounds better) and sang it to favorable applause. (Marc Glasser provided musical and much-needed chorus accompaniment. The filk is based on "Where Is Rabbi Finkleman? by Andy Breckman, for those interested.) Abby then performed "Imported Sly", which Rennie followed up with a filk about Imported Sly. (Done to "Chantilly Lace".) She then joined Sue on "Second Glass of Tully". They joined me in a return to the original filkroom, where I finally heard "Bend Over, Greek Sailor", as performed by Claire. We basically sat and listened until 5:00am before going to the hotel.

Monday was basically load up the gear, make a final pass through the dealers room, and shmooze in the Discave until Mordecai and Mark were ready to go. Sue, Rennie, Avi, and Christine went to a barbecue at Spike's parents' house. We got back to New York around midnight.

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THE MONTH OF LIVING DISASTROUSLY

Well, let's see. On June 30th I surprised a burglar in my house. The dear fellow broke three windows: two getting in and one getting out (he seemed to be more scared of me than I was of him). He did nothing except breaking my VCR (dropped it when I walked in the door) and cutting his hand to ribbons on the first window he broke (we're talking rank amateur here), but it cost me \$250 plus half a day off work. On July 4th I was rear-ended. No damage to the car but it did give me a headache for the day. On the 10th of July I discovered that the Housemates from Hell had failed to take over the phone, and that the P. O. had failed twice to forward the bill. This would not have been so bad except that they took in a real deadbeat with no security deposit and no utilities deposit, and she ran up a \$300 long-distance bill for which I am on the hook. Six days later a prowler put a brick through my kitchen screen door. I am now looking into alarm systems. (The detective investigating the earlier break-in says that mine is only the third one in two years in my neighborhood, but there is a sudden and inexplicable upsurge in burglaries throughout Arlington County.) On the 20th of July something happened which was not bad, merely weird: someone left a brand-new man's shirt (my size, too) inside my front storm door. On the 23rd, I began a brand-new career as an amateur lawyer. I appeared in court *pro se* (the only plaintiff to do so that day) and obtained a default judgement against one of the Housemates from Hell for \$265 plus interest. Collecting it is another matter, but at least the IRS will now allow me to write this off as a bad debt. Next month I have a return date for another suit on the phone bill. Hoover is now an outdoor cat; he started spraying to defend "his" territory against my housemate's cats, and I could not break him of the habit.

Work is eating me alive. Besides my full-time job, I have two independent consulting contracts. I should have begged off, but I ran the staff party at Disclave over Memorial Day weekend. John Pomerantz screwed me up by telling me my budget was \$150 when in fact it should have been \$250. I am way behind schedule on wallpaper removal and repainting; I haven't even made my Worldcon travel arrangements which I need to do as I am on the board of directors of Wail Songs, Inc., and our first BOD meeting is in Chicago. A step-cousin of mine is getting married on the 1st of September in Detroit.

Have I made sufficient excuses yet for not having mailing comments and more news?

